

NEW JERSEY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

**2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAMINATION
ADMINISTRATION GUIDE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Why do candidates have to take an examination?	1
When and where will the examination be held?	2
How is the examination developed?	2
What will the examination look like?	2
How will the examination be scored?.....	3
Are there preparation strategies for taking the examination?	3
What will happen on the day of the examination?.....	3
What should candidates do if they need special assistance or ADA accommodations?.....	3
Can candidates request a make-up examination?	4
What about security issues?	4
Will candidates get a chance to review their answers after the exam is held?	4
If candidates have a complaint, how can they appeal?	5
Is there a charge for submitting an appeal?.....	5
What happens if the examination is postponed?.....	5
Other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).....	6
Tips for test takers.....	10
What to expect post-exam.....	11
Conclusion	12

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

Introduction

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission (CSC) has prepared this guide for candidates who will participate in the 2015 State Correction Officer Recruit Examination. Please note that this title is only used for employment by the New Jersey Department of Corrections (DOC) in their adult state correctional facilities. Those interested in employment in county correctional facilities or with the Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) should consult future CSC announcements.

The information in this guide is designed to help candidates better understand the testing process. This guide offers a systematic method to assist candidates in preparing for the examination administration and explains what to expect post-examination. We encourage candidates to review this guide and the Law Enforcement Aptitude Battery (LEAB) Assessment Preparation Guide.

The LEAB Assessment Preparation Guide is designed to assist test-takers in preparing for the 2015 State Correction Officer Recruit Examination. Only candidates who have applied to take the 2015 State Correction Officer Recruit Examination will be able to access the LEAB guide. Once you complete your online application, a confirmation screen will be displayed. In that confirmation note, you will be directed to a website and given an “access code,” which will allow you to view EB Jacobs’ LEAB Assessment Preparation Guide.

Candidates should take advantage of any and all opportunities to prepare for the examination.

The examination will be designed on the basis of information obtained from a job analysis of the State Correction Officer Recruit title. The job analysis provides a description of the duties performed by incumbents and identifies the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required to effectively perform each of these duties.

Please note that no “study group” has been involved in the development or review of CSC examinations, and at no time has any examination material been provided to such groups. Additionally, the CSC is not responsible for any claims made by “study groups” or the manner in which they represent themselves for advertisement purposes.

Why do candidates have to take an examination?

The selection process in New Jersey's Civil Service System is designed to provide all applicants with an equal opportunity to compete for a position. The examination will serve as one objective tool in this process. Test scores will be used to identify qualified candidates and to generate a ranked list of eligibles to be considered for appointment by the DOC.

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

When and where will the examination be held?

The **tentative** timeframe to administer the 2015 State Correction Officer Recruit Examination is **March/April 2015**. However, in the event there are difficulties scheduling the examination for any unforeseen reason, the examination date may change. Candidates will be notified of their specific test date when examination notices are mailed two to three weeks prior to the test date. Candidates may be scheduled to take the examination at various sites (north, central, or south) throughout the state. Once candidates are notified of their scheduled examination center, directions can be obtained from our website at <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/about/contact/testing/>. Map out a travel route in advance of the examination date and plan to arrive at the examination center *early*, since no one will be admitted late. Candidates will not be allowed to refer to this guide or the LEAB Assessment Preparation Guide after they arrive at the examination center.

With the threat of high-tech cheating on the rise, **possession** of personal communication devices, such as cell phones, BlackBerrys, pagers/beepers, photographic equipment, MP3 players, or other similar electronic communication devices, is prohibited at test centers. Candidates who are seen with these devices in the test center, **even in a power-off mode**, will be disqualified and dismissed immediately. The device may also be confiscated to ensure that an attempt was not made to compromise the testing process. In addition, briefcases and other personal items should not be brought inside the test center. The CSC is not responsible for any personal items.

Upon completion of the testing process, candidates must leave the testing premises so that other candidates (still involved in the testing) will not be distracted by outside conversations. In some cases where the testing of multiple sessions is being conducted, you may be held, as a group, and released when the next group arrives. This is done in order to prevent interaction between those who have been tested and those who have not been tested.

How is the examination developed?

A job analysis was conducted to identify the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) that are necessary to perform the job of a State Correction Officer Recruit. A job analysis is the process of critically examining job components in order to provide a functional description of a job. As a part of this job analysis, information is gathered about the job through interviews, surveys, and/or observations of on-the-job activities of incumbents (permanent employees). Based on this job analysis, several KSAs were identified and rated as to their importance for job success. Examination questions will relate to those KSAs that were determined to be most critical.

What will the examination look like?

Please refer to the LEAB Assessment Preparation Guide (link provided upon receiving application confirmation).

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

How will the examination be scored?

Please refer to the LEAB Assessment Preparation Guide (link provided upon receiving application confirmation).

Are there preparation strategies for taking the examination?

Please refer to the LEAB Assessment Preparation Guide (link provided upon receiving application confirmation).

What will happen on the day of the examination?

On the day the examination is scheduled, plan to arrive at your designated testing site early. Due to the nature of the examination administration, **NO ONE WILL BE ADMITTED LATE.** You will be notified by mail of the time and place of the examination. Bring your notification card, two sharpened Number 2 pencils, and two forms of identification. One form of identification MUST include your photograph. Failure to do so may result in your being excluded from taking the examination. Valid forms of ID include: driver's license, passport, social security card, employee ID, county ID, bank-issued credit card with photo, and government-issued assistance ID (i.e., welfare). Forms of ID that are NOT accepted include: library card, shopping club card, and retail or department store issued credit card. If you are not certain that your ID is acceptable, call the CSC before your test date at (609) 292-4144 to find out what is or is not a valid form of ID.

Your notification card may not have an assigned room (a letter) for you to report to; therefore, your room assignment will be made at the test center, and staff there will direct you to a test room. Pay attention to any SPECIAL messages that might appear on your notification card.

What should candidates do if they need special assistance or ADA accommodations?

Candidates who require special assistance or ADA accommodations for this exam must check the corresponding box on the "Preferences" tab of their online application, regardless of whether or not they have previously been approved for accommodations with CSC in the past. Candidates who are indicating a need for accommodations for the first time will subsequently be contacted with further instructions.

Upon receipt of their exam notice with the test date, time, and location information, candidates who are already on file with CSC as being approved for accommodations must contact CSC at (609) 292-4144, in order to discuss the specifics of their accommodation needs for this exam.

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

Can candidates request a make-up examination?

According to the New Jersey Administrative Code 4A:4-2.9(c), make-up examinations for public safety open competitive and promotional examinations may only be authorized for the following reasons:

- Death in the candidate's immediate family, as evidenced by a copy of the death certificate;
- Error by the Civil Service Commission or the appointing authority; or
- Catastrophic injury or illness requiring an extended convalescent period, provided the candidate submits a doctor's certification containing a diagnosis and a statement clearly showing that the candidate's physical condition precluded his or her participation in the examination, as well as documentation from the candidate's employer noting the candidate's related leave from work;
- Military leave, which will be handled as stated in N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.9(c);
- Exoneration from pending disciplinary or criminal charges will be handled as stated in N.J.A.C. 4A:4-2.9(d).

Make-up requests must be submitted, in writing, with supporting documentation, to:
NJCSC Make-Up Exam Unit, P.O. Box 310, Trenton, NJ 08625-0310 within 5 days upon receipt of your Notification Card.

NOTE: All requests for **medical** make-up examinations must be accompanied by the Civil Service Commission's Medical Authorization for Make-up Examination form (DPF-728), completed by the treating physician. The Medical Authorization for Make-up Examination form can be obtained through the Make-Up Unit or from our website at <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/about/publications/forms/>.

What about security issues?

All candidates will be required to sign a pledge form at the examination center stating that they will not discuss the content of the examination with any candidates, individuals, groups, or organizations whose interest in the test process, product, or material could conflict with the objectives of the CSC.

Will candidates get a chance to review their answers after the exam is held?

To protect the security of this examination, there will be no post-exam review of any test material.

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

If candidates have a complaint, how can they appeal?

Each comment, suggestion, and appeal will be handled appropriately. If a problem occurs during the administration of the examination and causes a candidate to be placed in a position of disadvantage, an objection to the manner in which the examination was administered must be filed prior to leaving the examination center. Appropriate forms will be provided for that purpose on the day of the examination.

Candidates may file a content appeal if they believe the examination material is not appropriate for that title. Content appeals must be filed within five (5) days of the examination administration.

If a candidate wishes to file an appeal, he/she should be as specific as possible. Appeals based solely on opinion or rumor will not be addressed. If a candidate disagrees with a question, he/she should give specific reasons or proof as to why he/she disagrees.

The CSC will not entertain any UNSUBSTANTIATED complaints regarding breaches of security. Investigation and action will be taken only on signed complaints which are fully documented, i.e., which include the names of individuals who discussed the materials, as well as any witnesses to the discussion, nature of the discussion, and the date and place where the discussion occurred.

Is there a charge for submitting an appeal?

Candidates should be aware that as of July 1, 2010, all appeals pertaining to exam administration and/or exam content are subject to a \$20 processing fee, paid by check or money order to NJ CSC. Persons receiving public assistance or who have veteran status are exempt from this fee.

What happens if the examination is postponed?

If circumstances force postponement of the examination or in the case of inclement weather, the CSC will notify local radio stations as soon as that decision has been made. Please listen to local radio stations for examination postponement information. A message will also be posted on the CSC website at <http://www.state.nj.us/csc/>. Candidates may also call the CSC directly at (609) 292-4144 and listen to the pre-recorded message to find out the status of the examination.

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

Other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

When will the current State Correction Officer Recruit list expire?

The current list will expire when the list resulting from the 2015 examination becomes active.

Will the candidates on the current State Correction Officer Recruit list be able to carry over their scores to the 2015 examination?

No. Candidates who took the test for the prior announcement (2013) **cannot** carry over their scores to the 2015 examination. If you want to be included on the new list, you must first file an application and then take the test in 2015.

I am interested in also applying for other entry-level law enforcement titles. When will I have the opportunity to apply for the Entry-Level Law Enforcement examination (LEE)?

The next LEE announcement is **tentatively projected** to be posted in 2016. This announcement may include the titles of Municipal Police Officer, County Police Officer, Parole Officer Recruit, Park Police Officer, Campus Police Officer Recruit, Police Officer Recruit Human Services, Police Officer Palisades Interstate Park, Sheriff's Officer, State Park Police Officer Trainee, County Correction Officer, and Correction Officer Recruit Juvenile Justice.

If I take the 2015 Correction Officer Recruit examination and then apply for the 2016 LEE announcement, will I be scheduled to take the 2016 LEE?

Yes, any candidate who takes the 2015 Correction Officer Recruit examination and subsequently applies for any title within the upcoming 2016 LEE announcement will be scheduled to take the 2016 LEE. Candidates interested in employment for any of the titles within the 2016 LEE announcement will still need to submit a LEE application and any relevant fees associated with the application process. Candidates who take the 2015 Correction Officer Recruit examination will **NOT** have their score applied to any title/symbol for which they apply as part of the 2016 LEE announcement, when that eligible pool becomes active.

Once scheduled, may I change my testing location?

No. We make every effort to schedule candidates according to the preference indicated on their applications, however, because of the high volume, we may not always be able to do so. When you file your application, it is very important that you indicate the county where you prefer to take the test. **If you leave that part of your application blank, you will automatically be scheduled for testing in Mercer County.**

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

Where can I find more information about the State Correction Officer Recruit title?

You may view the job specification for this title by going to our website at <http://info.csc.state.nj.us/jobspec/32641.htm>. Additional information may also be found on the NJ Department of Corrections website at <http://www.state.nj.us/corrections/pages/careers.html>.

What is my Applicant ID number?

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 11A:4-1, all job applicants are requested to provide their Social Security Number (SSN) on applications to establish a unique means of identifying all of their records throughout the selection and appointment processes. Providing your SSN is voluntary. If you do not provide your SSN, another unique identification number will be assigned to you, and that number will appear on all subsequent records related to this exam. Please note that if you are claiming NJ Veteran's Preference, your SSN must be provided.

Is there a minimum and maximum hiring age?

Candidates need to be at least 18 years of age on or before the Closing Date shown on the examination announcement. There is no maximum hiring age for State Correction Officer Recruits.

How can I get Veteran's Preference?

Candidates may apply for Veteran's Preference by completing the Civil Service Veteran's Preference Claim Form located on the CSC website at http://www.state.nj.us/military/veterans/njdmava_form_05A-1.pdf and submitting it to the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA). In order to be awarded Veteran's Preference, the appropriate documentation must be submitted and approved by DMVA no later than eight days prior to the issuance of an eligibility list.

Do veterans get extra points?

No extra points are given to veterans. However, eligibles with disabled veteran or veteran status are grouped at the top of the certification list by their veteran status and then by their final averages. Disabled veterans are placed above veterans who, in turn, are placed ahead of non-veterans.

What is a certification?

It is a list of names selected from the eligible list that the CSC provides to an Appointing Authority (AA) for a specific jurisdiction or agency to use for their hiring process. The certification lists candidates who pass the exam and ranks them based on their score in the following order: disabled veterans (ranked by score), veterans (ranked by score), and non-veterans (ranked by score).

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

Who does the actual hiring?

The DOC is the Appointing Authority for this title (not the CSC). The CSC reviews the AA's documentation for each certification to ensure compliance with related rules and regulations.

Does being certified mean I'll be interviewed and/or appointed?

No. It means you MAY be interviewed and/or considered for appointment if you are reachable on the certification list.

What about tie scores?

The CSC does not break ties. Candidates who have the same final average and veterans' status have equal ranking on a certification. For example, if there are 20 people on the certification with the same final average and they are all non-veterans, they will be listed in alphabetical order by their last names, but they all have the same rank on that certification. If one of them is reachable for an appointment, all are reachable, and the Appointing Authority may hire any one of them.

Once a certification is issued, how are people chosen for appointment?

The process is described below:

- A. The Appointing Authority conducts background investigations for eligible candidates who indicate interest in being appointed. These investigations may include reports from their criminal, employment, and driving records. The AA will usually disqualify anyone with negative reports. In accordance with NJAC 4A:4-6, any false statement of any material fact (including educational and employment record) or any deception or fraud in any part of the selection or appointment process will be grounds for disqualification and possible legal action.
- B. Not all eligibles who pass the background investigation are offered the currently available jobs. Disabled veterans and veterans have absolute preference and must be appointed first. Where there are no disabled veterans or veterans, the "rule of three" applies. This means that the AA may select any one of the first three non-veterans for each appointment they make.
- C. The AA will schedule medical and psychological examinations for those candidates who are selected.
- D. Candidates must pass both the medical and psychological examinations to be appointed.
- E. The AA will forward the completed certification with supporting documentation to the CSC, where it will be reviewed for compliance with the rules and regulations.

The selection process often takes six months or more because it is so involved, so please be patient.

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

How do I notify the CSC about a change in my name or mailing address?

You must immediately notify the CSC in writing if you change your name or mailing address or if it is listed incorrectly on a notice that you receive from us. To ensure that your records are updated correctly, please include the following in your request for change:

1. Your name;
2. Your social security number or, if you have been assigned a unique number for the examination process, include that number;
3. Your new mailing address, including zip code;
4. Where you actually live, if it is different from your mailing address;
5. Your daytime telephone number;
6. Your e-mail address (if you have one); and
7. The effective date of the change.

This information may be mailed or faxed:

NJCSC Information Center
Division of Administration and Logistics
P. O. Box 310
Trenton, NJ 08625-0310

Fax: (609) 984-1064

You may also submit the request electronically through our website at <https://info.csc.state.nj.us/mailer/ChangeAddress.aspx>.

For security reasons, changes cannot be made by phone.

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

Tips for test takers

The test you will take is designed to assess job-related knowledge, skills, and abilities that have been deemed important for job success. Based on standards contained in the Federal Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection, only those job-related knowledge, skill, or ability areas that are necessary upon entry to a job are suitable for employment testing. In other words, if a subject area or ability can be learned on the job, it will not be represented on a test used to hire or promote job candidates. The CSC relies on the expertise of Subject Matter Experts (i.e., those with knowledge regarding the performance standards and requirements of the job) to make these determinations. For this reason, there may be some job areas not represented on this test.

In cases where generalized test questions are used, the important thing to remember is that the nature, context, or topic of the question is not as important as the underlying knowledge or ability required to answer the question. For example, a group of test questions referencing a set of rules and regulations may be included on a test in order to assess a job candidate's ability to interpret and apply rules based on the circumstances presented within a given situation. In this example, the specific content of the rules or the agency from which the rules have been taken is not necessarily important. In fact, the rules themselves may come from a fictitious organization. What is important is the candidate's ability to consider all the information presented, and through the proper analysis of this information, select the best answer to each question.

Below are a few test-taking strategies that may help you successfully complete your examination:

- Listen to the instructions provided by the test monitor. Ask questions if you're not sure what is being said.
- Make sure you know how much time you have to complete the exam and check your time periodically to keep track of the amount of time remaining. You will be responsible for tracking your own time. No warnings will be given about how much time is left. If you finish early, take some time to review your answer sheet to ensure that you have answered all of the questions and that your bubbles are darkened completely.
- You will be permitted to write in your test booklet. As you proceed through the test, you may wish to circle key words or concepts that may be important in answering test questions. However, all answers **MUST** be marked on your answer sheet before time expires, in order for them to be scored.
- Read each question carefully to ensure you fully understand what is being asked, and then try to answer the question without looking at the options.
- Review each answer option carefully and select the one which best answers the question.

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

- If you don't know the answer to a question, eliminate all options that are clearly wrong and place a mark next to the ones remaining. This will help you focus on the most viable options still to be considered.
- There is no penalty for guessing. So if you are still unsure of an answer, it's better to guess than to leave it blank.
- When you have completed the test, review your answer sheet to ensure each question has been answered and that all erasures are clean and thorough.

What to expect post-exam

- Your answer sheet will be scanned by an Optical Mark Reader (OMR) and scored. The number of questions you answered correctly will be calculated. This is your "Raw" score.
- Those who have established New Jersey Civil Service Veterans' Preference with the DMVA, and achieve a passing score, will be placed at the top of the eligible list in rank order by test score.
- You will be sent a notification card indicating whether you achieved a passing score or not. If you passed the exam, you will be given your score and rank.
- When DOC (hiring agency) is ready to hire from the eligible list, they will request that the list be certified. They will be sent the names and addresses of the top scoring candidates. These candidates will also be notified that their names have been certified to the Appointing Authority.
- Candidates who have been certified, must respond, in writing, to the Appointing Authority (within the timeframe stated on the notice) that they are interested in interviewing for a position. If candidates do not respond within this timeframe, they may be removed from the list and NOT considered for future appointments.
- Appointing Authorities may select from the top three eligible candidates or ranks. This is known as the "Rule of Three."
- Once a certification has been exhausted or has expired, another certification may be issued as other job openings arise. Additional eligible candidates will appear on the new certification in rank order based on their scores. This process will continue until the entire eligible list is exhausted or eventually expires.

2015 STATE CORRECTION OFFICER RECRUIT EXAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

Conclusion

This guide was designed to help familiarize candidates with aspects of the administration of the 2015 State Correction Officer Recruit examination. The suggestions provided here are not exhaustive; we encourage candidates to engage in whatever additional preparation strategies they believe will enhance their chances of performing effectively on the examination. Please refer to the LEAB Assessment Preparation Guide for information regarding specific study material.

Best of Luck on the Exam!